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Title: Regarding status of Kannada language.

SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR (DHARWAD SOUTH): Sir, I would like to speak in Kannada. I want to demand that Kannada language should be recognized as a classical language. Many languages have been recognized as classical languages but, unfortunately, Kannada language has not yet been recognized as a classical language.

*Sir, the agitation demanding classical language status to Kannada has entered its third year. Writers, Actors, Politicians and people from all walks of life are demanding the Union Government to accord classical language status to Kannada language. The Centre has not responded to this genuine demand of the State till today.

Now, Kannada people are celebrating Suvarna Karnataka (Golden Jubilee) and the agitation has intensified and I am afraid it may take an ugly turn if the Centre do not respond properly.

Kannada literature has been crowned with seven Gyanpeeth awards, the highest in the country despite hurdles in translation and lack of back up in the capital of the country. Out of seven Gyanpeeth awardees one Mr. V.K. Goecds and Shri D.R. Berdre belong to my parliamentary constituency and they have contributed more towards Kanada language. It has more than 2000 year old history as far as scripts and other evidences are concerned. But Mr. Speaker Sir, "I, would like to bring to you and the hon'ble members notice that the word Karnataka appears in Ramayana and Mahabharatha, though it is spelt as *karnata* and not Karnataka. the word *Karnataka* is several thousnand years old. A Sanskrit poet says that one that dances in your ears is *karnata* language and the palce is Karnataka." Now, the farmers Vice Chancellor of Mysore University, De. Javaregowda is on fast unto death. I have raised this issue on several occasions in this August House. Karnataka Government and the Chief Minister Mr. H.D.

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*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

Kumarswamy and Shri B.S. Yedyappa, Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka have requested the Centre repeatedly in this regard. Therefore, I strongly demand that the Union Government and the Hon'ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to reciprocate the emotional feelings of the people of Karnataka by according the status of classical language to Kannada without any further delay. My mother toungue is Kanada. My blood is Kanada, my breathe of Kanada. I have come to this stage by the grace of speaking this Kanada language. I would have spoken on English but to give more and due respect to Kanada language today I am speaking in Kanada.

Under such circumstances, my breath and blood are Kannada and five crores of the people of Karnataka are demanding that it should be recognized as a classical language. I request the Government to recognize Kannada as a classical language.